

## BEFORE THE ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

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2 3	SUSAN BITTER SMITH Chairman BOB STUMP Commissioner BOB BURNS	Arizona Corporation Commission  DOCKETED
4	Commissioner DOUG LITTLE	MAR 1 6 2015
5	Commissioner TOM FORESE Commissioner	DOCKETED BY
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8	IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF NAVOPACHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC., FOR A	DOCKET NO. E-01787A-14-0302
9	DETERMINATION OF THE FAIR VALUE OF ITS PROPERTY FOR RATEMAKING	DECISION NO
11	PURPOSES, TO FIX A JUST AND REASONABLE RATE OF RETURN	ORDER
12	THEREON, TO APPROVE RATES DESIGNED TO DEVELOP SUCH	
13	RETURN, AND FOR RELATED APPROVALS.	<b>}</b>
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15 16	Open Meeting March 2 and March 3, 2015 Phoenix, Arizona	
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18	BY THE COMMISSION:	
19	Having considered the entire record here	in and being fully advised in the premises, the
20	Arizona Corporation Commission ("Commission	n") finds, concludes and orders that:
21	FINDIN	GS OF FACT
22	1. In Decision No. 73649, dated	February 6, 2013, the Commission adopted a new
23	section in the Arizona Administrative Code	("A.A.C.") R14-2-107, establishing an alternative
24	streamlined ratemaking application and proces	s for non-profit cooperatives providing electric or
25	natural gas utility service ("Rule 107"). This De	ecision also amended the existing rule establishing the
26	filing and processing requirements for a public so	ervice corporation rate application ("Rule 103").
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- 2. On July 9, 2014, Navopache Electric Cooperative, Inc. ("NEC" or "the Cooperative") began the process of a rate application under Rule 107 by submitting to the Commission's Utilities Division ("Staff") a Request for Pre-Filing Eligibility Review in accordance with A.A.C. R14-2-107(C).
- 3. On August 14, 2014, NEC met with Staff in accordance with A.A.C. R14-2-107(C)(3) to review eligibility in filing under Rule 107, finalize the form of customer notice and discuss a proposed form of recommended order.
- 4. On August 14, 2014, NEC filed a Request for Docket Number and Notice of Filing and a Proposed Form of Customer Notice. A Docket Number was assigned opening this rate application docket.
- 5. On August 29, 2014, NEC filed a certification of mailing for the Customer Notice. The Customer Notice was mailed via first class mail to all NEC customers on August 21, 2014. The customer notice set a deadline of September 24, 2014, for customers of NEC to file intervention requests and/or objections to the rate application that NEC anticipated filing no later than September 15, 2014.
- 6. On September 11, 2014, NEC filed its application for a rate increase ("the Application") under Rule 107 in Docket No. E-01787A-14-0302.
- 7. By the close of business on September 24, 2014, the Commission had received 15 objections to the rate increase, below the 1,000 required to make NEC ineligible for the Rule 107 process. There were no intervention requests filed.
- 8. On October 8, 2014, Staff filed a notice of eligibility in the docket indicating that NEC met all of the requirements outlined in Rule 107.
- 9. On October 8, 2014, Staff filed a notice of sufficiency indicating the data provided by NEC in the Application were sufficient in meeting the requirements of a cooperative rate application.

### DESCRIPTION OF NEC

10. NEC is a member-owned Arizona non-profit rural electric cooperative with its principal business office in Lakeside, Arizona. NEC is a public service corporation providing electric distribution service to approximately 38,399 meters in Navajo, Apache, Greenlee and Gila counties in Arizona and approximately 1,553 meters in Catron County, New Mexico.

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11. NEC is a Class A Utility under A.A.C. R14-2-103(A)(3)(q).

12. NEC receives its power supply under a power supply contract with Public Service Company of New Mexico.

- 13. NEC has an 8-member Board of Directors ("Board") elected to oversee all aspects of the Cooperative's operations and approve the annual operating budget. The Board approved the filing of this application at a special meeting of the Board held on June 18, 2014.
- 14. NEC's last rate case was filed on April 29, 2011 (based on a test year ending April 30, 2010) and approved in Decision No. 73255 on July 30, 2012. The current rates went into effect August 1, 2012, for NEC's Arizona customers.

### **NEC PROPOSALS**

- 15. In the Application, NEC utilized a test year ending December 31, 2013.
- 16. Also in the Application, NEC requested to increase its rates to produce an additional \$1,908,652 in system-wide base revenue over actual test year base revenues of \$47,720,186. This increase represents an increase of 4.0% over actual test year base revenue (the increase is \$1,646,693 when compared to adjusted test year base revenue and represents an increase of 3.43% over adjusted test year base revenue).
- 17. In its filing, NEC stated the rate application would result in system-wide Operating Income of \$4,465,647 and Net Income of \$2,114,358.
- 18. NEC stated the rate increase is necessary to recover increased operating costs in the categories of operation and maintenance, consumer accounts, customer service and information, sales, administrative and general, depreciation and amortization, taxes, interest and payroll. The rate increase would allow NEC to maintain the financial integrity of the Cooperative.
- 19. As attachments to the Application, NEC submitted audited financial statements for the year ended April 30, 2014, and a copy of its certified annual financial and statistical report to the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation ("CFC") for calendar year 2013.

## **COOPERATIVE ELIGIBILITY**

20. For a cooperative to utilize the streamlined rate case process referred to as Rule 107, several eligibility requirements must be met prior to beginning the process. As documented in the

notice of eligibility, Staff agrees that NEC has taken the necessary steps to comply with the eligibility requirements of Rule 107.

#### STAFF ANALYSIS

- 21. As part of its review of the Application, Staff reviewed the purchased power costs; the fuel bank balance; the base revenue increase and test year data; the level of increase requested for each rate schedule/class; the applicability of the capital projects and plant in service ("PIS"); the acceptability of system losses and reliability indices; the proposed rate base, revenue, and expenses; and the proposed revenue requirement. Staff also completed a compliance review.
- 22. NEC and Staff, the only parties to this case, are in agreement on all issues in this case.

  Purchased Power Costs
- 23. NEC reported actual purchased power costs for the test year equal to \$28,264,346. Several adjustments to purchased power costs were included increasing purchases power costs by \$4,424,136. The majority of the increase in purchased power costs was related to transmission refunds processed during the test year equal to \$4,209,262 which reduced purchased power during the test year. The additional \$214,874 in adjustments to purchased power costs are related to adjustments in billing units and rates that are necessary to make the test year more representative of NEC purchased power costs in the future. Staff was able to track and verify the purchased power costs through a sampling of invoices provided by NEC to support the reported costs.
  - 24. NEC and Staff agree on the adjusted purchased power costs filed in the Application.
- 25. NEC did not calculate a new base cost of power in the Application. Rule 107 specifies that the increase request of a maximum of 6% is in base revenue not attributed to revenue from an adjustor mechanism. The base cost of power (\$0.066160 per kWh) established in Decision No. 73255 remains unchanged for the purpose of calculating the Purchased Power Cost Adjustor ("PPCA"). The PPCA is designed to recover or refund the difference between the base cost of power included in the Cooperative's base rates and the actual cost of power.
- 26. However, in the Application, the adjustments to purchased power costs noted above were originally processed through the PPCA. Because these costs flowed through the PPCA during the test year, it was necessary to re-calculate the PPCA revenue and restate the PPCA for purposes of

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the adjusted test year revenue. A PPCA revenue adjustment was incorporated in the adjusted test year PPCA revenue to account for what should have been collected by the PPCA when comparing adjusted purchased power costs to the revenue already collected through base rates. Staff matched the \$1,921,006 PPCA revenue adjustment in NEC's application.

- 27. In addition, as the PPCA revenue was re-calculated based on the adjusted purchased power costs, it was necessary to neutralize the effect of revenue from the adjustor during the test year. As a result, the PPCA over/under recovery balance from the beginning of 2013 to the end of 2013 resulted in an over recovery of revenue from the PPCA. A corresponding adjustment for the same dollar amount in the opposite direction was necessary to zero out the effect of the PPCA balance during the test year.
- 28. Staff was also able to verify the increase in base revenue from the test year reported revenue. The \$262,114 increase to base revenue was directly related to the fact that the new rates approved in New Mexico were not in effect throughout all of calendar year 2013. New Mexico base revenue was increased \$324,216 to account for a full year of new rates in effect. At the same time, Arizona revenue was decreased \$62,102. The majority of the decrease was attributable to billing adjustments.
- 29. NEC and Staff agree on the definition of base revenue and agree the base cost of power should remain unchanged from that established in Decision No. 73255.
  - 30. NEC and Staff agree on the methodology utilized to re-state the PPCA.

## Rate Design

- 31. NEC's proposed increase is below the maximum increase of 6% permitted under Rule 107. Also in accordance with Rule 107, monthly customer charge increases for the residential rate class are less than 25% and there are no changes requested to the percentage relationship of the rate blocks. NEC did not propose any rate structure change or non-price tariff change.
- 32. NEC and Staff agree on the rates set forth in Exhibit A, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein.

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## Staff Engineering

33. Staff physically inspected NEC's distribution facilities on October 15, 2014. Staff evaluated the Cooperative from an engineering perspective based on key metrics, an analysis of construction expenditures included in PIS, analysis of data provided by NEC through discovery as well as a facilities inspection.

- 34. Based on its analysis, Staff concluded that NEC:
  - A. has a robust process for identifying and approving needed capital projects;
  - B. is operating and maintaining its electrical system properly and all projects inspected were in service and being used and that the costs of the projects are reasonable;
  - C. has, since its last rate case, developed its system with a focus on improving reliability, including pole inspection and replacement program, reconductoring projects, and sectionalization improvements; and
  - D. has an acceptable level of system losses, consistent with industry guidelines along with reliability indices being within acceptable limits.
- 35. Staff has recommended the projects constructed and included in PIS since NEC's last rate case be found used and useful in the Cooperative's provision of service.

## Rate Base, Revenues, and Expenses

- 36. The Application requested a system-wide rate base of \$87,400,193, adjusted test year total revenues of \$55,011,125 and expenses of \$52,192,171.
- 37. NEC and Staff are in agreement on the proposed rate base, revenues, and expenses and Staff recommends adoption. However, Staff highlighted the need for future filings to incorporate lower rate case expense as a result of the streamlined rate case process.

## Revenue Requirement and Rate of Return

38. NEC proposed a revenue requirement of \$56,657,818. The proposed revenue requirement would produce an operating margin of \$1,886,594 for a 2.16% rate of return on an original cost rate base of \$87,400,193 and system-wide operating income of \$4,465,647 (Staff

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- 39. calculated the rate of return on operating margin leading to a 2.16% rate of return while NEC calculated the rate of return on operating income leading to a 5.11% rate of return).
- 40. NEC's proposed revenue would produce a 1.75 times interest earned ratio and a 1.67 debt service coverage ratio.
  - 41. Staff has recommended adoption of NEC's proposed revenue requirement.

### Consumer Services

- 42. Staff reviewed the Commission's records between January 1, 2011, and December 31, 2014, and found 55 complaints during that period of time. All of those complaints have been resolved and closed. To date in 2015, Consumer Services has not received any additional complaints.
- 43. As noted above, Consumer Services received 15 customer opinions in opposition to the Application which was within the limits to proceed under Rule 107. The Corporations Division of the Commission finds the Cooperative in "Good Standing".

#### CONCLUSIONS

- 44. NEC's application is in compliance with Rule 107 allowing NEC's rate case to be processed under the alternative streamlined process.
  - 45. NEC and Staff are not requesting a hearing in this matter.
  - 46. NEC's OCRB and FVRB are determined to be \$87,400,193.
- 47. NEC's proposed rate increases for each customer class are within the guidelines established in Rule 107.
- 48. During the thirty (30) days customers had in which to object to the rate increase, only 15 customers filed objections which is below the number required to cease processing under Rule 107.
- 49. Staff is in agreement with NEC's proposed rate base of \$87,400,193, adjusted test year total revenues of \$55,011,125, and expenses of \$52,192,171.
- 50. The rates and charges approved herein will produce an operating margin of \$1,886,594 for a 2.16% rate of return on an original cost rate base of \$87,400,193 and system-wide operating income of \$4,465,647 (Staff calculated the rate of return on operating margin leading to a 2.16% rate of return while NEC calculated the rate of return on operating income leading to a 5.11% rate of return).

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2	("TIER") and	a 1.67 debt service
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4	increase in act	ual base revenue (th
5	53.	Staff's recommend
6	54.	The rate design pr
7	55.	The base cost of p
8	56.	Under the rates a
9	of \$2.67.	
10	57.	NEC and Staff are
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12	1.	Navopache Elect
13	meaning of A	rticle XV of the Ari
14	2.	The Commission
15	subject matter	of the Application.
16	3.	Notice of the App
17	4.	The rates and cha
18	5.	It is just and reason
19	forth in Exhib	oit A.
20	6.	Navopache Elect
21	A.A.C.R14-2-	107.
22		
23	IT IS	THEREFORE C
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51.	The rates and charges approved herein will produce a 1.75 times interest earned ratio
ER") and	a 1.67 debt service coverage ratio ("DSC").

- 52. The rates and charges approved herein will increase revenues by \$1,908,652 or a 4.0% crease in actual base revenue (the increase is \$1,646,693 over adjusted base revenue).
  - 53. Staff's recommendations should be adopted.
  - 54. The rate design proposed by NEC and agreed to by Staff should be adopted.
  - 55. The base cost of power should remain at \$0.066160 per kWh.
- 56. Under the rates approved herein, residential customers will experience a rate increase of \$2.67.
  - 57. NEC and Staff are in agreement that a hearing is not requested in this case.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

- 1. Navopache Electric Cooperative Inc. is a public service corporation within the meaning of Article XV of the Arizona Constitution and A.R.S. §§ 40-250 and 40-251.
- 2. The Commission has jurisdiction over Navopache Electric Cooperative, Inc. and the subject matter of the Application.
  - 3. Notice of the Application was given in accordance with law.
  - 4. The rates and charges authorized herein are just and reasonable.
- 5. It is just and reasonable and in the public interest to approve the rates and charges set forth in Exhibit A.
- 6. Navopache Electric Cooperative Inc.'s. Application meets the requirements of

#### **ORDER**

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that Navopache Electric Cooperative, Inc. is hereby directed to file, on or before, April 1, 2015, tariffs with a new schedule of rates and charges consistent with Exhibit A

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the revised schedules of rates and charges shall be effective for April 2015 usage billed on or after May 1, 2015.

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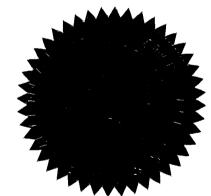
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Navopache Electric Cooperative, Inc. shall notify its customers of the revised schedules of rates and charges authorized herein by means of an insert, in a form acceptable to Staff, included in its next scheduled billing after a Decision in this case is effective and by posting on its website.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Navopache Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s base cost of power remains at \$0.066160 per kWh.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Decision shall become effective immediately.

BY THE ORDER OF THE ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

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DISSENT: _		 *****	
DISSENT: _	<u>.</u>	 ·	

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SERVICE LIST FOR: Navopache Electric Cooperative, Inc. 1 DOCKET NO. E-01787A-14-0302 2 Mr. Michael A. Curtis 3 Mr. William P. Sullivan 4 Attorneys for Navopache Electric Cooperative, Inc. Curtis, Goodwin, Sullivan, Udall & Schwab, P.L.C. 5 501 East Thomas Road Phoenix, Arizona 85012-3205 6 Ms. Lyn A. Farmer, Esq. 7 Chief Administrative Law Judge 8 Hearing Division Arizona Corporation Commission 9 1200 West Washington Street Phoenix, Arizona 85007 10 Mr. Steven M. Olea 11 Director, Utilities Division Arizona Corporation Commission 12 1200 West Washington Street 13 Phoenix, Arizona 85007 14 Ms. Janice M. Alward Chief Counsel, Legal Division 15 Arizona Corporation Commission 1200 West Washington Street 16 Phoenix, Arizona 85007 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26

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### NAVOPACHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

	Approved Rates					
	Power Dist					
		Supply		Wires		Total
RESIDENTIAL						
<u>Residential</u>						
Customer Charge	:	\$0.000000	\$	22.17	\$	22.17
Energy Charge 1-400 kWh	\$	0.05400	\$	0.02458	\$	0.07858
Energy Charge Over 400 kWh	\$	0.08500	\$	0.03407	\$	0.11907
T. (11. /TOL)						
Time of Use (TOU)						
Customer Charge	\$ \$	<del>-</del>	\$	. 28.67	\$	28.67
Energy Charge On-Peak kWh		0.13480	\$	0.00959	\$	0.14439
Energy Charge Off-Peak kWh	\$	0.02900	\$	0.02684	\$	0.05584
Residential TOU 12 Month						
Customer Charge	\$	-	\$	28.67	\$	28.67
Energy Charge On-Peak kWh	\$	0.13480	\$	0.00959	\$	0.14439
Energy Charge Off-Peak kWh	\$	0.02900	\$	0.02684	\$	0.05584
COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL						
Commercial & Industrial						
Customer Charge	\$	-	\$	124.00	\$	124.00
Demand Charge (kW)	\$	2.50	\$	7.65	\$	10.15
Energy Charge First 300 kWh per kW	\$	0.07500	\$	0.00640	\$	0.08140
Energy Charge Over 300 kWh per kW	\$	0.02600	\$	0.00446	\$	0.03046
Commercial & Industrial-Primary						
Customer Charge	\$	_	\$	252.00	\$	252.00
Demand Charge (kW)	\$	2.50	\$	7.65	\$	10.15
Energy Charge First 300 kWh per kW	\$	0.07500	\$	0.00640	\$	0.08140
Energy Charge Over 300 kWh per kW	\$	0.02600	\$	0.00446	\$	
Primary Discount - Demand & Energy	ڔ	-3.00%	ڔ	-3.00%	Ş	0.03046
Thinaly Discount - Demand & Chergy		-5.00%		-3.00%		-3.00%
Commercial & Industrial-TOU						
Customer Charge	\$		\$	160.00	\$	160.00
Demand Charge (kW)	\$	2.35	\$	7.70	\$	10.05
Demand Charge - On Peak (kW)	\$	14.50	\$		\$	14.50
Energy Charge (kWh)	\$	0.02350	\$	0.00329	\$	0.02679
Commercial & Industrial-TOU-Primary						
Customer Charge	Ś	_	\$	252.00	¢	252.00
Demand Charge (kW)	\$ \$ \$	2.35	\$	7.70		10.05
Demand Charge - On Peak (kW)	¢	14.50	\$	-	\$	14.50
Energy Charge (kWh)	۶ \$	0.02350	۶ \$	0.00329	۶ \$	0.02679
Primary Discount - Demand & Energy	ڔ	-3.00%	ڔ	-3.00%	ڊ	
Triniary Discount - Demand & Litergy		-5.00%		-5.00%		-3.00%

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## NAVOPACHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

	Approved Rates					
	Power Dist					
		Supply		Wires		<u>Total</u>
SMALL COMMERCIAL						
Small Commercial						
Customer Charge	\$	-	\$	27.23	\$	27.23
Energy Charge (kWh)	\$	0.06380	\$	0.03446	\$	0.09826
Small Commercial-TOU 6 Month						
Customer Charge	\$	-	\$	36.78	\$	36.78
Energy Charge - kWh On Peak (Billed Nov-April)	\$	0.12380	\$	0.03130	\$	0.15510
Energy Charge - kWh Off Peak (Billed Nov-April)	\$	0.02880	\$	0.03674	\$	0.06554
Energy Charge kWh (Billed May-Oct)	\$	0.06380	\$	0.03446	\$	0.09826
Small Commercial-TOU 12 Month						-
Customer Charge	\$	-	\$	36.78	\$	36.78
Energy Charge - kWh On Peak	\$	0.12380	\$	0.03130	\$	0.15510
Energy Charge - kWh Off Peak	\$	0.02880	\$	0.03674	\$	0.06554
IRRIGATION AND WATER PUMPING						
Irrigation & Water Pumping						
Customer Charge	\$	-	\$	40.23	\$	40.23
Demand Charge (kW)	\$	5.00	\$	0.24	\$	5.24
Energy Charge (kWh)	\$	0.04980	\$	0.04450	\$	0.09430
Irrigation & Water Pumping-TOU						
Customer Charge	\$	-	\$	45.23	\$	45.23
Demand Charge (kW)	\$	2.40	\$	3.10	\$	5.50
Demand Charge - On Peak (kW)	\$	8.80	\$	0.63	\$	9.43
Energy Charge (kWh)	\$	0.02230	\$	0.01984	\$	0.04214

### NAVOPACHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

	Approved Rates				
	<u>Power</u>		<u>Dist</u>		
	Supply		Wires		<u>Total</u>
LIGHTING					
Security Lights - Consumer Owned					
175 Watt MVL - 75 kWh/Month \$	4.35	\$	4.74	\$	9.09
175 Watt MVL - 75 kWh/Month       \$         250 Watt MVL - 110 kWh/Month       \$         400 Watt MVL - 175 kWh/Month       \$         100 Watt HPS - 34 kWh/Month       \$         150 Watt HPS - 50 kWh/Month       \$         250 Watt HPS - 85 kWh/Month       \$	6.38	\$	5.39	\$	11.77
400 Watt MVL - 175 kWh/Month \$	10.15	\$	9.13	\$	19.28
100 Watt HPS - 34 kWh/Month \$	1.97	\$	3.92	\$	5.89
150 Watt HPS - 50 kWh/Month \$	2.90	\$	5.43	\$	8.33
250 Watt HPS - 85 kWh/Month \$	4.93	\$	6.03	\$	10.96
Security Lights - Cooperative Owned					
175 Watt MVL - 75 kWh/Month \$	4.35	\$	6.63	\$	10.98
250 Watt MVL - 110 kWh/Month \$	6.38	\$	7.95	\$	14.33
400 Watt MVL - 175 kWh/Month \$	10.15	\$	13.03	\$	23.18
400 Watt MVL - 175 kWh/Month       \$         100 Watt HPS - 34 kWh/Month       \$         150 Watt HPS - 50 kWh/Month       \$         250 Watt HPS - 85 kWh/Month       \$	1.97	\$	7.16	\$	9.13
150 Watt HPS - 50 kWh/Month \$	2.90	\$	8.67	\$	11.57
250 Watt HPS - 85 kWh/Month \$	4.93	\$	9.26	\$	14.19
Security Lights - Pole Charges					
Pole Charges \$	-	\$	4.17	\$	4.17
Street Lights - Cooperative Owned					
175 Watt MVL - 75 kWh/Month \$	4.35	\$	6.63	\$	10.98
250 Watt MVL - 110 kWh/Month \$	6.38	\$	6.91	\$	13.29
175 Watt MVL - 75 kWh/Month       \$         250 Watt MVL - 110 kWh/Month       \$         400 Watt MVL - 175 kWh/Month       \$         1000 Watt Lamp - 435 kWh/Month       \$	10.15	\$	13.03	\$	23.18
1000 Watt Lamp - 435 kWh/Month \$	25.23	\$	16.67	\$	41.90
Street Lights - Consumer Owned					
100 Watt HPS - 34 kWh/Month \$	1.97	\$	3.92	\$	5.89
150 Watt HPS - 50 kWh/Month \$	2.90	\$	5.43	\$	8.33
250 Watt HPS - 85 kWh/Month \$	4.93	\$	6.03	\$	10.96